



Patent  
Attorney's Docket No. 1012774-000003

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

In re Patent Application of ) **MAIL STOP IF**  
Hiroaki Sano et al. )  
Application No.: 10/525,979 ) Group Art Unit: 1791  
Filed: February 28, 2005 ) Examiner: JUSTIN R. FISCHER  
For: TUBE CONNECTING APPARATUS ) Confirmation No.: 5008  
AND TUBE CONNECTING )  
METHOD )

**COMMENTS ON STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE**

Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

The Notice of Allowability issued in this application is accompanied by an Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance. This paper is being filed to clarify the record with respect to comments in that Statement of Reasons for Allowance.

The Statement of Reasons for Allowance comments, with respect to independent Claim 12, that "the method of Suzuki does not involve a step of pressing the tubes at a first, second, and third position, wherein (a) the first position is sandwiched between the second and third positions and (b) the applied pressure, at the third position, is larger than a corresponding pressure at a first position."

The language in Claim 12 does not set forth this specific wording. Rather, Claim 12 recites that the method involves pressing at least two tubes at a first position on the tubes to deform the tubes to a flat state, pressing the tubes at a third position on the tubes which is adjacent to the first position to hold the tubes in a flat state, pressing the tubes at a second position on the tubes which is a position separate from the first position and which is a position opposing the third position via

the first position to hold the tubes in a flat state, advancing a cutting plate between the second and the third positions to cut the tubes, relatively moving the tubes which have been cut to face one end portion and another end portion of the tubes, and evacuating the cutting plate from a predetermined cutting position between the second and third positions to contact the end portions of the tubes closely to each other for connecting the tubes. The claim also recites that when pressing the tubes at the second position, a pressing position on the tubes is changed from the first position to the second position and a pressing amount to the tubes is set to be gradually larger corresponding to the change in the pressing position on the tubes.

This paper is filed to clarify the record and point out that the particular wording in the Statement of Reasons for Allowance is not actually set forth in Claim 12. Thus, the comments in the Statement of Reasons for Allowance should not be understood to imply that the claims in this application recite anything different than that which the claims themselves recite.

Should any questions arise concerning this matter, or should the Examiner disagree in any way with the observations above, the Examiner is kindly asked to contact the undersigned to discuss this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: March 31, 2008

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